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Application No. 09/976,384
Amendment Dated May 14, 2004
Reply to Office Action of December 18, 2003
Attorney Docket No.: 49287.4.1

Amendment to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0017] with the following amended paragraph:

[0017] ~~Inasmuch~~ In as much as the on-site soils typically contain moisture and salts, galvanic or electrolytic corrosion typically occurs within metallic components buried or otherwise immersed in the soil. The galvanic corrosive action is accelerated and/or supported if the on-site soils are permitted to make contact with the rear surfaces of the individual blocks, with the area adjacent the blocks being characterized as the "corrosive front". Thus, deterioration of any metallic components disposed in close proximity to the interface between the block wall and on-site soils may suffer rapid deterioration. In order to reduce the level of activity of the corrosive front, and increase the life of metallic components disposed therearound, the utilization of clean granular fill has been found to be helpful but never sufficient to eliminate the problem. However, because of the nature of certain soils, taken together with the salts present in the individual blocks, coupling means may be provided to link individual blocks to the stable anchoring assembly which are non-metallic and thus generally immune from corrosive action. In these situations, there remains a need for clean granular backfill, particularly for reduction and/or elimination of hydrostatic forces which may otherwise develop if saturated on-site soils are permitted to remain in contact with the retaining wall structure. In accordance with the present invention, however, the retaining wall is provided with additional stabilizing features through the utilization of coupling means which conveniently link the blocks to a remotely disposed stable anchoring assembly.

Please replace paragraph [0022.1] with the following amended paragraph: The following paragraph was added as part of Applicant's September 3, 2003 amendment accompanying the Request for Continued Examination. Please amend this paragraph as indicated to provide appropriate reference to the amended figures.

[0022.1] As shown in Figures 1, and-3, 4, and 5, a selected block 11 includes at least one hollow core 14 and a rear surface 12. The selected block includes a front web portion 41, a rear

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web portion 42, and a pair of side web portions 43 interconnecting the front 41 and rear web 42 portions. The rear web portion 42 of said selected block includes an access bore 15 formed therein such that said hollow core 14 can be accessed from the rear surface 12 of said selected block. The selected block 11 further includes an inner surface 40. The inner surface 40 includes a rear inner surface portion 44 defined by the rear web portion 42, side inner surface portions 45 defined by the side web portions 43, and a front inner surface portion 46 defined by the front web portion 41. The keeper 26, which may be referred to as the metal bracket or metal bracket of the keeper, engaged in the hollow core 14 of the selected block 11 includes may be a metal bracket structured to include a rear bracket portion 47 confronting the rear inner surface portion 44 of the rear web portion 42 of the selected block 11 and a pair of side bracket portions 48 confronting the side inner surface portions 45 of the side web portions 43 of the selected block 11. A pair of elongated connectors 27 run from the metal bracket 26. Each of the elongated connectors 27 includes a body segment 29 and opposed proximal 30 and distal ends 31. The proximal end 30 of each of the elongated connectors 27 is engaged with the rear bracket portion 47 of the metal bracket 26. Each of the elongated connectors 27 is in one respective access bore 15 of the rear web portion 42 of the selected block 11 and runs from the access bore 15. The distal end 31 of the elongated connector 27 includes an anchoring assembly attachment means that includes a hook. The metal bracket 26 further includes a pair of end bracket portions 49. Each of the end bracket portions 49 runs inwardly from one respective side bracket portion 48. The hollow core 14 is partially defined by tapered side web portions 43 tapering inwardly from a front web portion 41 of said selected block 11 to a rear web portion 42 of said selected block 11.